

STATINTL

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Air Force, Navy Avoid Birchers

By Drew Pearson

The United States Navy and Air Force are keeping strictly aloof from the John Birch Un-Americanism hoopla which the Army fell for in San Antonio, Germany, and other areas. They don't want to make headlines with any Gen. Edwin Walker incidents.



When Culver City, Calif., wanted to use the Navy Band for a so-called "Freedom Program" featuring the film, "Communism on the Map," Adm. Daniel F. Smith, Chief of Navy Information, shied away. He had already seen what happened at an earlier rally at Santa Monica and knew that this film carried innuendo that Harry Truman, his former Commander-in-Chief, was a traitor.

Going into the office of Assistant Secretary of Defense Arthur Sylvester, Admiral Smith said:

"Unless you order me to do so, I shall not permit the Navy Band to play at the Culver City rally."

Sylvester emphatically agreed.

Earlier, the 4th Army got itself enmeshed in a Junior Chamber of Commerce "seminar" on communism at San Antonio which split the town wide open. The Air Force at San Antonio is a much bigger

and more important unit of national defense, but it stayed strictly aloof.

The 4th Army, however, under the command of Lt. Gen. Donald Booth, issued official orders giving "retirement point credit" to Army personnel who attend the seminar. Personnel from this office will be available at the Municipal Auditorium (just inside the main entrance) to assist individual reservists in preparing DA Form 1380 for the award of point credit," read the official order.

"Request that all recipients of this letter give the seminar wide publicity," continued the order. "Particularly desire that you inform all possible enlisted reservists of the details of the seminar, to include the award of point credit and the tentative program."

The seminar for which the reservists got credit was filled with invective and innuendo against the late President Roosevelt, the late Gen. George Marshall, and former Secretary of State Dean Acheson. Listening to these diatribes, according to the 4th Army official order, entitled Army Reservists to credit.

Headline Seekers

An interesting conglomeration of rabble-rousers and professional patriots is taking advantage of the current war hysteria to raise money and win headlines.

One is Gerald L. K. Smith, the famous anti-Semite.

Smith climbed aboard the investigation of Gen. Edwin Walker, who recently was reprimanded for teaching John Birch ideas to his troops, to raise money for his anti-Semitic organization. One of his appeals for money started off with this: "For God's sake stand with us."

It continued: "One of the biggest scandals in modern history is about to break. A member of the United States Senate who exerts great influence with the White House has been caught red-handed in a recommendation which patriotic members of Congress brand as a transmission belt to treason, if not treason itself."

"You will have difficulty believing what I am about to tell you, but I know what I am talking about. High officials in the armed services are recently giving orders out of the Pentagon to the effect that officers who make extremely strong statements against communism will be disciplined."

Then Smith got in his appeal for money.

"With tears in my soul," he wrote, "I appeal to you to stand with us with your money, your prayers, and your moral support, as you have never stood before. Some people who receive this could really give generously if they so desired. Let the humble giver be honored. Insert the coupon in the enclosed self-addressed envelope which

requires no postage and rush to the nearest mailbox."

Not So Mysterious

The mysterious Senator that Smith referred to was Sen. William Fulbright of Arkansas, and the secret memo was so non-secret that Fulbright himself published it in the Congressional Record. He also made a speech on the Senate floor—neither mysterious, nor secret.

The memo was addressed to Secretary of Defense McNamara, calling attention to the fact that the military were getting mixed up in partisan politics along with some of the big munitions makers—just as retiring President Eisenhower warned in his farewell speech to the Nation. Apparently Gerald L. K. Smith's money-raising letter didn't bring results, so he followed it up with a second appeal headed "Stop Treason!" It said:

"A few days ago I sent out a confidential letter to a few friends. Since that letter went out we have learned the name of the mystery Senator who wrote the treason memo. . . .

"The fight is on," continued Smith, getting down to the real purpose of his letter. "Help us fight. We need money. Enough did not come as a result of the earlier letter. Stop treason!! Give again!! GLKS."

Copyright, 1961, Bell Syndicate, Inc.